

Notes and Observations

TEICHOBLA FILICIVORA MEYRICK FEEDING IN HARTSTONGUE FERN.—In the past, I have bred this moth from male fern, the foodplant given by L. T. Ford in his "Guide to the Smaller British Lepidoptera", and in June 1965, I caught some of the imagines flying round these plants in a rather dark part of a Cornish wood.

In April 1968, I collected a few fronds of hartstongue near Looc in Cornwall hoping to breed the related species *T. verhuellella* Stainton. Late in May, five of these emerged, followed in June by seven *filicivora*. Possibly someone has had this experience before, but I cannot recall its being recorded.—R. FAIRCLOUGH, Deanoak Lane, Leigh, Reigate. 14.xii.68.

NYMPHALIS POLYCHLOROS L. IN 1967 AND 1968.—I personally did not for certain see the large tortoiseshell in 1967, but there were again reports of the species in the Swanage area in the spring; and Dr. R. H. Clarke saw a specimen in his garden near Oxford on 26th August of that year.

Last year, 1968, I observed one in the grounds of this school on 26th March. I first saw it from my classroom, flying about and settling on the terrace. From there it flew against the window from which I was watching, paused, and then doubled about two or three times before disappearing. On 15th July, I took one out of two specimens seen in a churchyard set in our local woods. This is only the second specimen I have taken all my life, the previous one being in 1935.

Finally, one of the boys here, a quite knowledgeable naturalist, informed me that he saw a large tortoiseshell in the outskirts of Southampton on 6th October. It was at first inclined to discount this report, on the grounds of the date: but later learned quite by chance of an almost certain sighting of this species, by a most experienced observer, in Surrey, on that very day (a particularly pleasant one). I am given to understand that, although the large tortoiseshell usually appears to go early into hibernation, it sometimes flies again about the end of September or beginning of October, if the weather is good, for a week or so.—I. R. P. HESLOP, Stroud School, Romsey, Hants. 24.xii.1968.

THE FOODPLANT OF EREBIA AETHIOPS.—The text and illustration in "The Complete British Butterflies" (1968) by Mansell and Newman, follow Stokoe (1944) in giving the Blue Moor Grass (*Sesleria caerulea*) as the principal foodplant of *Erebia aethiops*. However, the known distribution of both *Sesleria* and *E. aethiops* only partially correspond. In Scotland, *Sesleria* is a very local plant and almost entirely confined to the calcareous schists of the Grampian Highlands, whereas Ford (1945) shows that *E. aethiops* is widely distributed on the mainland and occurs on some of the Isles. It is possible the misconception originally stems from Frohawk's "Natural History of British Butterflies" (1924), where the Purple Moor Grass (*Molinia caerulea*) is incorrectly described as the "Blue Moor Grass". This misleading common name was adopted in the 3rd edition of South's "The Butterflies of the British Isles" (1941) and apparently interpreted as *Sesleria* by Stokoe in "The Caterpillars of the British Butterflies".—J. MITCHELL, Dubhaniel, Gartocharn, nr. Alexandria, Dunbartonshire. 2.i.1969.